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ABSTRACT

One of the most important myths in education is that of progress. The idea derives from a specifically Western messianic tradition and contains the belief in the growth and the development of an organism. That belief emerges from Greek and Hebraic thought, is modified in Christian theology, and then is secularized in science. The persistence and good of existing social relations is posited, and the notion of good and evil is projected into the future in a manner that limits consideration of possibilities. In much contemporary social and educational science, progress is tied to an assumption of determinism. The problem is social amelioration that reconciles the world of the individual with the world that already exists. The notion poses fundamental contradictions for educational practice. The intent of schooling is to educate individuals; the mandate is a normative and progressive challenge. Its progressive element is that schooling is to help people understand the constraints, restraints, and possibilities of our human conditions. The actual assumptions about progress that underlie pedagogy, however, reify social conditions and institutions. There is a minimum of reflection and choice, and a mystification of institutional arrangements that is anti-intellectual. (DCS)

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The Idea and Ideology of Progress in Social and Educational Thought

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The Idea and Ideology of Progress in Social and Educational Thought

One of the most important myths in education is that of progress. The idea of progress is a moral as well as descriptive element in our contemporary cosmology. Social institutions and human affairs are imbued with belief and purpose, in a future of "upward and forward" motion. Public and individual life, which previously have been seen as a reenactment of cycles of necessity, are now conceived as an open-ended series of movements involving choices that range in content from political options to the selection of consumer commodities. This notion of movement, which is believed to establish the goodness and sanctity of life, is one of the most potent myths underlying educational thought and action.

The idea of progress derives from a specifically western messianic tradition. Progress contains the belief in the growth and the development of an organism. That belief, emerges from Greek and Hebraic thought, is modified in Christian theology, and then is secularized in science. The guarantor of movement in our social and psychological conditions is people's ability to impose an ever increasing control over both the natural and social environment. The messianism of progress is a theme that exists in both liberal and revolutionary thought of our time.

This paper is concerned with the themes of progress that underlie our contemporary beliefs in change and social amelioration. It will sketch some of the social inventions and innovations that provide an historical background to our educational practices and ideologies. The sketch is drawn mostly from secondary sources that have considered the history of the idea of progress. In the last section, the limitations of the idea and ideology of progress to educational thought will be explored. The paper is an attempt to consider social history as a way of focusing upon the role of the intellectual in contemporary efforts for social amelioration. In such a brief essay, however, the nuances and conflict that are part of our customs, traditions and patterns of conduct cannot be given the focus they deserve.

I. PROGRESS AS METAPHOR

The development of American social and political thought in the last 30 years illustrates the power of the idea of progress as a dynamic of institutional life. Following World War II, many believed that the same energy used to defeat our enemies could be turned inward to solve pressing social problems. As it was believed that biological and physical science provided for our material welfare, it was assumed that social science could provide the necessary guidance to alter institutions and improve the psychological and social well-being of people. Legislation of the 1960's assumed that changes in school practices would have a direct and positive impact upon larger social issues. Title I of the 1965 Elementary and Secondary Education Act, for example, assumed that professionals within institutions could "break the cycle of poverty and equalize life time opportunities" (McLaughlin, 1976, p. 397). Solutions to problems of government, social welfare and education were to

be found through the systematic application of science.

The language of the Federal programs was that social progress could can be regulated through systematic, rational thought. A former Associate of Commissioner of Education, Leon Lessinger (1970) argued that engineering techniques would improve education by making school managers operate efficiently and effectively. Hendrik D. Gideonese (1968) of the same Office of Education and writing for a newly created Federal educational research and development center, spoke of the need to apply scientific and technological knowledge to educational practice. Drawing an analogy to agriculture, space, medicine and industrial research and development, Gideonese believed that "the degree to which the policy questions arise in educational research, must or ought to be considered as a subset of those which arise for science as a whole". The role of science, he continued, is to develop a model that could coordinate theory and practice.

Government activities created a more direct and prominent role for the scientific expert in defining, organizing and evaluating change. In the past, efforts to alter American social institutions were the combined efforts of lay, business, political and professional people. After the 1960's, reform increasingly became a task of the expert who, with the tools of science, identified problems of institutional life, designed the programs to solve these problems and prescribed and evaluated possible remedies. Symbolic canopies accompanied these ameliorative activities. Theories of change and reform were to give coherence and direction to our social conditions. While faith in progress may not be as strong in the 1980's, the assumptions of progress that underlie scientific planning have become part of our taken-for-granted beliefs.

The idea of progress has both moral and scientific elements. Progress contains a conception of the ultimate good that is thought to occur in proportion to the triumphs in history (see, e.g. Bury, 1932, Berger, 1976, Nisbit, 1976, 1980, Wagner, 1969). The scale of values seemingly resides outside of history. There is a pr[illegible]etic quality in which a belief is offered in cyclical recur[illegible]e or in the transhistorical nature of redemption. The prophecy [illegible] not temporal in that it is believed an inalienable part of the Western human condition and aspiration.

The idea of progress is metaphorical not literal. The word provides us with a commanding image on which to place the mingled facts of persistence and change that confront us in our daily lives. It is a powerful metaphor in that it engenders derivations that become propositions which guide thought and practice. In using the metaphor, however, we must realize that no one has seen progress, death, growing, unfolding, development or birth of a civilization.

II. PROGRESS AS GROWTH AND DEVELOPMENT.

One of the major and consistent elements of the metaphor of progress is the belief that social and physical life have characteristics of an organism. We think of our culture or institutions as growing. We refer to change that is intrinsic to the entity and which is part of the structural element of that entity. While our cultural beliefs recognize that change may require activation and nourishment from external agencies, we tend to look at the internal organization of our institutions, their functions and structure as a way of describing growth and hence progress.

The belief that society and its institutions possess an organismic nature is fundamentally a Greek idea. That idea of organism, however, remains a premise and preconception of change in contemporary social and biological theory (see Lewontin, 1983a, b). Progress as organistic growth is embedded in 18th and 19th century theories of social evolution, of natural history, and the conception of change underlying modern notions of stage-development and functionalism. In its modern form, progress implies a belief in rational understanding, a possibility of deducing generalizations which remain valid for some time and, to a degree, a determinism in our social conditions. People's ability to impose an ever increasing control over both the natural and social environment is made central to social and moral life.

The analogy of progress to an organism contains certain assumptions (Nisbet, 1976). These assumptions are: (1) change has directionality, that is, there is a trend or longitudinal shape to movement; (2) Growth of an organism is cumulative, that is, what may be seen at any given moment is the cumulative result of what has gone before it in its life; (3) Developmental change is irreversible. It has stages and these have genetic as well as sequential relations to one another; And, (4) there is purpose to growth. St. Augustine saw purpose in the human drama that was transhistorical and spiritual. Purpose, for Marx, was entailed in the human struggle towards a classless and just society. It is the St. Augustine view of revelation of God's work that provides continuity to our contemporary Western models of rational change and progress. The dialectical logic of Marx in which an organism is defined as well as altered by their environment receives little attention.

The metaphor of progress can be dangerous when made into something seemingly real. The initial encapsulation and iconic vision of something distant can be drawn as something more literal and empirical. Whereas Descartes thought of the world like a machine, contemporary thought ceases to consider our social conditions like a machine but as a machine. In much social and educational theory, the analogy becomes reality. When the iconic visions are made attributes of reality in the study of social change, the possibilities, limitations and struggles of our human condition are obscured.

III. CYCLES Of DEVELOPMENT: THEMES OF GENESIS, DECAY AND AN UNFOLDING NECESSITY

While our contemporary idea of progress as a linear pattern of development is an invention of the Renaissance, the notions of development and progress are found in classical thought. The Greek conception of the world did not place man at center stage or as the axis of society around him. While there was a belief in development and growth, social improvement was not the basis of the organization of society. The Greeks, for example, did not consider a philosophy of biological change or cultural improvement of humanity. They were, however, fascinated with the idea of change. They saw change as part of the nature of each living thing. Both living social and physical "things" had their own laws of cause, mechanism and purpose. Their change was related to the principles of organic growth.

Progress was made a part of Greek consciousness through the idea of physis. Everything physical and cultural had its inherent pattern of growth, its fixed succession of stages and purposes. It was believed that there was an "inner essence" or "residual being" in each and every element of the physical and social universe as the principle of generation guided life and its decay (Nisbit, 1976, p. 22). Heraclitus, for example, examined and distinguished things according to the way they grew. He compared social customs and codes as well as the physical and organic world. A progressive and generative character was given to the elements of the world, establishing a developmental or evolutionary relationship of the past to the present.

In Greek thought, causes are points of reference to understand the physis of anything. Aristotle, for example, saw cause in relation to a genetic relationship among family, village or state. This genetic relationship was one of different social species. The causes of development in each of these species is a self contained, developmental process (physis) of becoming. Physis involves four points of view. One is the material cause, such as the original seed. Two is the form or pattern of development of the life cycle. Three is the efficient or motor cause such as the mechanisms of conflict, strife, cooperation or love. Four, the final cause, is contained in the process of growth from the very beginning. While called causes, they are really points of reference by which to consider the process of development.

Physis was a moral idea as well as a descriptive category of culture. In moral, psychological, political and economic matters, physis meant adapting circumstances as far as possible to what is conceived as the "nature" of a thing. Heraclitus, for example, compared "the way things grow" to a "moral police." He implied that if things do manage to deviate from what is the physis of each, retribution will be swift.

A part of the Greek view of physis was the necessity of cycle. Everything moved in the way it was constituted. Aristotle believed that all that is natural and necessary in the world is organic and in a constant process of genesis, decay and hence cyclical change. The

necessity of the cycles was distinguished from those elements of life that were accidental and random. The distinction between the accidental, the random and that which is necessary is found in the Greek words of theory (theoria), poiesis and praxis. The latter two deal with the working out, doing and making, of which there is no constant laws. Outcomes in social and political contexts, it was believed, are dependent upon strategic and situated action. Theory, however, involved observation of and reflection upon phenomena which one could not alter.

While the idea of progress and generation was a major social invention of the Greeks (Nisbet, 1976), one might expect that the Greeks would see the world as stationary. Their world was one of tradition and history. Sublimating people's destiny to the necessity of events had a strong emphasis. Yet, a particular view of generation and progress developed. It involved myriad manifestations of genesis and decay that was related to the seasonal cycle of plant life. The seed and its growth had a transcendent importance in Greek philosophy and science. The seed symbolized the idea of fecundity and sterility, cyclical development and recurrence, potentiality, immanence and telic purpose.

The work of Lucretius (1BCE) introduces the idea of a step by step advancement of mankind. He argued that development was slow, gradual and continual. The essence of human growth lay in the self-propelled character of development. Once begun, the development happened over time in a way that unfolded the capacities of man that were inherent from his beginning. The pinnacle of a cycle for Lucretius was also the beginning of decline, decay and eventual disintegration. For as things come into being, so must they go out of being. Progress and degeneration are two sides of the same cycle of genesis and decay.

Three more elements of Greek thought that have reference to contemporary thought need to be mentioned. One, the idea of social development precedes that of biological evolution. Second is the mistranslation of the word physis by the Romans. They describe the word as "nature," directing attention to the physical world including the physical aspects of man and society (Nisbit, 1976, p. 21). The Romans thus set in existence a distinction between the physical and social, a dicotomy, that has plagued modern thought. Third is the difference between history and development. The former focused upon the chronological events and interpretation of people in time and context. Thucydides defined history as setting down in exact detail the people and events in the Peloponnesian War. Development, in contrast, was concerned with extra human, external principles that were not rooted in historical events. The notion of development, then, was a way of expressing a panorama that had no specific historical context or interpretive quality to the lives of particular societies or individual people.

IV. THE CHRISTIAN MODIFICATION: THE OFFER OF HOPE AND FUTURE

With Christianity, the elements of resignation and fatalism of the classical attitude was altered to one of hope and future. Time became linear and non-reversible. Events proceeded from genesis to the axial

moment of crisis, crucifixion and resurrection, and from that point on "to the final consumation at the end of the time-line and time itself" (Wager, 1969, p. 30). Christian mythology suggested the decline from the golden age, man's pilgrimage as a rise from the sinful fall to ultimate grace, and the whole of terrestial history as an interlude between two forever unchanging eternities--the world of man and the world of God. The early Christian view posited a notion of historical necessity or historical inevitability, joining the idea of divine necessity found in the Old Testament and a kind of internal self-perfecting necessity found in Greek thought, especially that of Aristotle.

The idea of historical necessity is an important element in Christian thought. What has happened in the past is believed not merely actual but necessary. Each event follows an inexorable logic and purpose from the preceding event. The entire process from the start to the finish may be seen as actualizing some latent devine design. Further, there is a singular, unilinear pattern to that development. The individual life histories of peoples form successive stages in identifying progress. The pattern that is discernible is a necessary one made by God.

St. Augustine (3-4 C.E.) provides a focal point for considering this early Christian view of progress. History contained a dual process. God was seen as not only the Creator who brought mankind into existence but, borrowing from the Greeks, God was seen in a develo[illegible]ntal, progressive light. This immanent developmentalism also contained the idea of the unity of mankind. A society or civilization is a single entity that undergoes a necessary sequence of unfolding and self-realizing stages. There was believed to be a single, united flow of time which was made to encompass everything that had happened in the past and that would continue into the future. The Christian view of the cycle of genesis and decay was unique and never to be repeated cycle by which people progressed. This was in contrast to the classical view in which there was a context of multiplicity, plurality and recurrant cycles.

The idea of historical inevitability in Augustine, however, involves contradictions between the sacred God given history and the endless repeating of secular events in the cycles of time (Nisbit, 1976, p. 71). Augustine argues that there are two natures to man, the base and the noble. Conflict in the City of Man involves the selfish struggle of covetous man in which there is hate and strife. There is also conflict between the City of Man and the City of God. The conflict is cosmic, theological and historical.

A particular distinction of the meaning of cause between Greek and Christian thought emerges in the ideas of necessity and conflict. Earlier, I discussed the Greek notion of cause as related to physis. Cause had four points of reference to consider the development of a species. In Christian thought, however, the idea of cause was altered. The notion of historical necessity involved a singular, unilinear pattern to development. No longer is cause a point of reference but something antecedent that produces an effect. It is the later notion of cause that

has become so important in our contemporary empirical sciences.

V. PROGRESS AS MOVEMENT TOWARDS THE FUTURE: GOD AND SCIENCE

A gradual and significant shift in cultural consciousness occurs in the period between the work of St. Augustine and 16th century Western Europe. Rather than a "Dark Age", the period involved a reconceptualization of time, the development of millenial thought and the emergence of modern science. These intellectual changes occurred in relation to economic, political and social transformations. The interplay of these elements provide an horizon by which to account for the idea of progress. To sketch this interplay is to illustrate a relation between human hope, ideas and social context.

Our modern conception of progress was prepared for by a change in consciousness about time that occurred by the 12th century. Prior to that period, time was linked to God. It was a symbol of paucity and death, inseperable from the ephemeral. Taxes were tied to notable events which broke the routines of life, such as celebrations of victory or noble man's birth. Christians interpreted the events of life from both the Old and New Testaments in which there was no clear conception of time. Gradually, however, time was transformed into something definite, not infinite. It was to be rationalized and measured, a vivifying element of life and a technique for public, financial and legal administration. The new conception of time allowed the idea of progress to be defined as cumulative increases through the ages.

As the conception of time changed so did man's belief about his involvement in salvation. History began to be seen as realized by the actions of individuals. Early utopian thought, for example, defined the millenium as being brought by the work of man (Manuel & Manuel, 1978). By the 16th century, progress moved into the City of Man, with the accumulation of knowledge rather than the spiritual to bring the good life. In place of the Christian view of universe and purpose is a belief in the rationality of universe and the growing confidence of the power of man over his environment and ultimately his destiny. The belief that civilization has progressed from the past, is now progressing, and will continue to progress into the unforseeable future is made part of the intellectual horizon.

Science assumes importance in millenial thought for determining the coherence and possibilities of human progress. Francis Bacon's New Atlantis, for example, developed a science for a Christian commonwealth. While Bacon devalued inherited book learning and glorified the discoveries of the artisans as the real knowledge about how nature worked, the analogy between the City of God and the City of Man penetrated his thought (Manuel and Manuel, 1979). Bacon saw science as redemptive gospel and scientists as the appointed prophets and priests. The movement to rationality was further fostered by the discoveries of Newton and Galileo. Theirs was a search for the scientific basis of society in its most fundamental laws, such as those found in physics. Advancement no longer involved in decay and eventual death but a

synthesis of the past and a prophecy of the future (Nisbet, 1976).

It is important to recognize that the idea of progress in 16th and 17th century science was conceived within its larger religious context. The science of Bacon, Newton, Galileo and DesCarte was tied to the heavenly city. Newton, for example, expressed faith in the unity of religion and science. The Copernican order was seen as a divine order. The millenium would be preceeded by a flourishing of the arts and science. To study the laws of motion and the biblical prophecies were, for Newton, the same (Manuel, 1974). Descartes' rules for science were rules that would demonstrate the existence of the world, Man and God. An irony of science is that its modes of reasoning created a secularization that eventually devalued the religion that it was originally to glorify.

A close relation between religion and science such as associated with Newton and his contemporaries is established in the Puritan revolution (17th century). The Puritans defined God as no longer a remote, separate, directing omnipotence but a God who unfolds and advances. The Puritan milleniarists transferred the role of Providence to the "natural laws" where God was thought to operate. Reviving the 12th century Joachimite prophesy, the Puritan's focused upon the arts and science as both a sign of imminence of the golden age of the spirit on earth and a cause of that imminence. The Joachimite millennist thought, however, was modified by the Puritan emphasis on evolution rather than revolution, and an idea of "public" good that emerges from utilitarian reform. Only by the cultivation of research into nature and man could the millennium be brought to an early existence on earth (Nisbet, 1980). The developmental thought of the Puritan was assimilated into the writing of Locke, Montesquieu and Rousseau, combining all people into a single progressive series that reaches its apogee in Western civilization.

Carl Becker (1936) argues that the modern views of science sprang from the same spiritual sources and thought as Christianity. The philosophes of the 17th and 18th century, he argues, had no choice but to find a dream that was an intoxicating as the Christian dream which they could not accept. The concepts of salvation and perfection was moved from the heavens to earth. In place of atonement, the philosophies offered the concerted efforts of mankind. In place of the judgment of God, the opinion of posterity was offered. The new article of faith which called upon nature, however, was the same as that being discredited in the City of God.

The new belief in progress was made in a context of expanding commerce, deepening humanism and a belief in the spreading control that people had over nature. The power of an expanding bourgeois influenced the cultural definitions of religion, philosophy and the underlying notions of progress. The different historical situations in England, Scotland, Germany and France produced a background for the cross-currents of beliefs that developed (Pollard, 1968). In each situation, there was a different relationship of nation-state to economic condition that influenced intellectual thought. In England, the battle against mercantilism was won by the 17th century. The philosophers saw the

modern institutions working in conjunction with the numerous plans of individuals. There was a look to the future in France as the old aristocratic system had not been fully broken. The 17th century German society, in contrast, was in a period of deep strain, conflict and transformation. The German bourgeois was without a base and its philosophers, such as Hegel, looked to the spirit for the ultimate answers.

In each instance, though, the vision of truth, justice and progress was tied to the emerging power of the bourgeois and its liberal ideals. The social and physical world as seen as offering an endless possibility of wealth, power and betterment if the state, nobility and church were restricted. Science was seen as mirroring the world and providing its rational consideration. The capitalist world was believed to be one of rational merchants who made decisions by counting and testing profit rate, in which success went to merit, and in which all start equally before the law and flourish only as their human needs are satisfied. The rationality of science was seen analogous to and offering the same improvement and progress that the market offered.

VI. TO PROGRESS OF CULTURE AND SOCIETY

Between the 17th and the 19th century, the idea of progress shifts from a spiritual context to a descriptive idea that embraces knowledge alone; then to one that is to comprehend the whole of human culture, morality and politics. Progress becomes more deeply humanistic, emphasizing peoples involvement in the creation and sustainment of their social conditions.

One way of considering the emerging humanism is to look at Fontenelle's "Quarrel of the Ancients and the Moderns" (1688). Europe was seen as the center of the stage of progress in which the current age was the highest. The "Quarrel" provides an intellectual statement that tied progress to the development of knowledge. Two currents give this argument its character. One was the Cartesian idea that celebrated the uniformity of the laws of nature. The second was a dedication to pure knowledge, giving a primacy to the intellect and to knowledge rather than to the social, political or moral implications of progress. Knowledge was thought to build upon itself. It was cumulative and continued into the indefinite future. The "Quarral of the Ancients" removes the idea of progress of its metaphors of genesis and decay and leaves only genesis and growth.

The metaphor of progress expands in the 18th and 19th centuries to consider the development of government, economies, social institutions of all types, even morality and human happiness. Intellectuals such as Comte, Condorcet, Leibniz, Marx and Spencer begin to extrapolate from a curve of development of the past to the present into a curve of development that includes the future. The idea of progress is united with the belief that there is an existence of a natural order and natural history that follows until things are arrested or diverted by artificial circumstances (Nisbit, 1976). Progress is defined as a normal tendency of

man. Kant, for example, establishes principles of evolution and progress of mankind that give justification to social and moral perfection in time. Reforms of government and society are latent, inherent in nature's provision of progress.

The progress of civilization becomes grounded in psychological and sociological laws given by science. Spencer "picks up this notion of progress as not an accident, not a thing within human control but of beneficent necessity" (Nisbit, 1976, p. 123). The laws of organic processes and the laws of all progress are the movement (evolution) from a simple into complex and successively differentiated transformation of the homogeneous into the heterogeneous. This differentation includes society, government, commerce, manufacturing, language, literature, society and art. The 16th century Puritan millennial thougnt reappears in the American Revolution as a political as well as a moral movement. The American government becomes the vehicle to bring humanity to perfection.

The idea of progress, though, has people who doubt its results, its values and the processes of unfolding society. Socialists and utilitarians, for example, are challenged by people such as the French Tocqueville who, in the second volume of Democracy in America, saw modern democratic equality as having destructive effects on Western Civilization. Others, such as certain elements of positivism, disown the past although assume that science can bring forth a secular millenium.

VII. PROGRESS AS NATURAL HISTORY, EVOLUTION AND THE COMPARATIVE METHOD: TRANSHISTORICAL ANALYSIS AND SOCIAL DETERMINISM

During the 18th and 19th century, two forms of analysis emerge that maintain faith in the idea of progress. One is the study of "natural history", the underlying forces of the natural order that provide for the current and future state of mankind. Another form of analysis is evolutionary social theory which defines change as necessary, logical and sequential in realizing a higher and better order. In both instances, the process of human development is seen as successive steps or stages through which mankind has passed to reach its present eminence. To explain the eminence, the philosophers searched for the pristine conditions where there is no corruption provided by specific social circumstances.

The discovery of nature was to be by rational means and recourse to reason. There was no concern with concrete places, times and persons. The focus was upon patterns and trends that seems transhistorical. Adam Smith in Scotland and the Physiocrats in France, for example, sought to cut through the surface of appearances, to penetrate beneath the corrupting, deflecting or interfering surfaces and circumstances to get at the nature of rights and freedoms. Adam Smith's Wealth of Nations is a rational attempt to understand the nature of wealth and of wealth getting activities (Nisbit, 1976, p. 145-151). Rousseau's Discourse is a recapitulation of the social and cultural development of man.

The 19th century social evolutionary was drawn from the 18th century idea of progress in natural history. The premise of social evolution is that change is natural and contains both static and dynamic elements. Change is simply the incessant realization of a higher level of order. The evolutionist focused upon the civilization as an entity and how the given cultural institutions give form that which is natural to development. The entities were not the totality of geographic or historical situations but specific elements such as law or government. Further, evolution was directional; immanent, as the entity being considered developed internally; continuous, with logical gradations of steps within a single series; necessary and logical, as change proceeded from uniform causes. Comte's laws of three stages under which human knowledge passes was considered as evidence of the evolution of thought, with the last stage as positive or scientific knowledge. Kant and Hegel provided ideas of endemic conflict or tensions of internal elements as the motivating elements of evolution.

It is in Darwin's The Origin of the Species (1859) that the idea of evolution receives widespread acceptance. Darwin's work culminated a hundred year period in which a revolutionizing bourgeoise had emerged and change was seen as the only constant. The idea of ceaseless change preoccupied the scientific, literary, philosophical and political consciousness of European culture.

The idea of evolution introduced two dynamics of change (Lewontin, 1983a). One was transformational, that is a collection of objects evolve because every individual element in the collection undergoes a similar transformation. The second was variational evolution in which variation arises at random among individuals in an ensemble. Variation occurs by the "change of frequency of different variants rather than by a set of developmental transformations of every individual" (Lewontin, 1983 a, p. 23). The features of Darwin's organic world, which is often confused in discussions of contemporary research, is the asymmetry between fit and diversity. Not all evolution is adaptive, as any cause of differential survival and reproduction will result in some evolution, not just adaptive evolution. Darwin's contribution, however, was not in the epistemological re-orientation or in the idea of evolution. It was in a change in the object of study from average properties of groups to the variation between individuals within groups to understand the mechanism of the organism.

The 19th century comparative method drew upon social evolutionary beliefs which had little to do with Darwin's populational and statistical studies of biology. A comparative method assumed that the recent history of the west provided a direction that mankind should take, and comparisons, such as traditionalism vs. modernity, are useful to describe the evolution of social conditions. The comparative method contained the following reasoning: There is a temporal time series relationship among the different cultures or social situations. Co-existing peoples and social organizations can be arranged in a logical spatial fashion. From this logical arrangement, a developmental or evolutionary series can then be abstracted from the concrete existence of

actual people in historical periods. Spencer, and later Parsons, used a comparative method to study people and periods to establish validity to the idea that there is an evolutionary development, a progressive differentation of type and function through time.

The idea of progress as natural history and evolution influenced not only social thought but the methodology and procedures of science itself. Karl Pearson, an applied mathematician, drew upon social evolutionary premises to argue that mankind achieves progress chiefly through military and commerical rivalry of nations. In a 1900 speech, given during the Boer War in South Africa, Pearson argued that man is subject to universal laws of inheritance a' i that societies need

> . . . a high pitch of internal efficiency to insure that its numbers are substantially recruited from the better stocks and keep up a high pitch of external efficiency by contest, chiefly by way of war with inferior races, and with equal races by the struggle for trade routes and for sources for raw material and of food supply. This is the natural history of mankind and I do not think you can in its main features subvert it (Pearson, 1969, p. 107).

The evolution of the survival of the fittest was, to Pearson, not only in relationship of individuals but also to society. The white man in South Africa has greater social intensity which in turn, has produced greater social instinct. The stability of the race, Pearson continued, depends entirely on the extent to which social interest and feeling are organized by a "homogeneous whole, not a mixture of superior and inferior races" (Pearson, 1969, p. 108).

The continual progress of mankind is "the outcome of a bitter struggle of race with race, the result of man, like all other life being subject to the stern law of survival of the fitter, to victory of the physically, mentally and better organized". It is important, Pearson reasons, to maintain a sense of common interest and to feel the pressure of struggles of man against man: "The tribe with the greater social feelings survived; we have to thank the struggle for existence for first making man gregarious and then intensifying, stage by stage the social feelings (Pearson, 1969, p. 110)".

These sentiments of social intensity and evolution are embedded in Pearson's mathematical work. Pearson saw human communities as subject to the same laws of natural history as those of "herds of buffalo or communities of ants." All have an organic history that science can explicate. Science is to explore the implications of nomogeneity and conflict between groups. The correlations of Pearson's product moment coefficient can be viewed as ways of expressing his belief in the centrality of homogeneity and the need to remove variation to create greater social intensity and common interest. The social beliefs about evolution and natural history that were a background for 19th century England become presuppositions in contemporary social and psychological research that draws upon Pearson's statistics.

At this point, we need to distinguish three aspects of 19th century evolutionary theory. One is the theory of biological evolution; a second is a theory of social evolution. (It is interesting to note the idea of social evolution came before the theory of biological evolution). Biological theory is a population and statistical theory, such as Darwin's Origin of the Species. A theory of social evolution is a typological construction, such as the discussions of social class, kinship, culture, lore and society as a whole. The theory of social evolution in Comte is not built upon the variation of phenomena which Darwin describes but a conception of organismic growth. Typologies are emphasized. The theory of social evolution is a broadened, extended, and elaborated theory of natural history.

The modern form of natural history or evolutonary theory is that of functionalism. Early functionalism included both a theory of stability and a theory of change. Durkheim, for example, focuses upon internal processes of social systems in the study of social change, emphasizing immanence, continuity, cumulative accretion and uniformity. Distinctions were made between changes within a social system and changes of the social system, that is of the structure of the system. In most contemporary work, however, the emphasis is on internal forces, moving most current functionalist theory towards the stability and dysfunctions of the system (Nisbit, p. 234). In addition, while contemporary functionalists do accept history as important to change, history is generally not considered in its theories.

A third relevant aspect of evolutionary theory is related to Marx. Marx's work can be read in at least two different ways. One gives reference to the historical movement from feudalism to capitalism and finally communism. This social and utopian view maintains a theory of evolution that has similarities to the natural history of the 18th century. A second interpretation is to view Marx as offering a method of analysis. The dialectical quality of elements in a society, the role of conflict and contradiction, and the relation of modes of production, culture and consciousness provide a method to understand the historical conditions in which one lives. The later view accepts the method of study but considers Marx's historical arguments of evolution as reasonable at the time of writing but not adequate in light of contemporary circumstances (see, e.g. Aronowitz, 1982).

The idea of progress has become so deeply embedded in our commonsense and scientific thought that it is taken-for-granted. The formation of American social science at the turn of the century organized its practices around a belief in progress. The early social scientists were concerned with social amelioration as a way to guide change (Popkewitz, 1984). The advancement of knowledge would bring forth a better world. Economics, sociology, psychology and educational sciences were to provide sciences that guide people towards a world that had remarkable similarities to that of the Christian millenarians. Edward Thorndike, for example, asserted that science could be directly applied to human affairs to solve political and social problems. Thorndike possessed a vision of the necessary and inevitable connection of science

and social affairs, stressing a moral idealism and optimism that was combined with a faith in statistics and efficient organization (see Joncich, 1968).

VIII. THE IDEA AND IDEOLOGY OF PROGRESS: SOME CONCLUDING THOUGHTS

The idea of progress has undergone a transformation from the Greek to our contemporary situation. While variations and doubts about the meanings of progress remain, the millenial themes persist. Further the securalization of the notion of progress obscurs the origins, assumptions and values of this idea. In this section, I would like to consider the uses and abuses of the idea of progress in social theory. In certain instances, I will argue the idea of progress has become ideological. A belief is posited about the persistence and good of existing social relations. Further the notion of good and evil is projected into the future in a manner that limits our consideration of possibilities. These utopian and political visions are important to consider.

One conclusion from the history of the idea of progress is its particular Western cosmology. The idea is related a Christian view of the world that has been transformed and secularized in the last few centuries. The view is of a world that is already defined yet in evolution. The role of people is to understand the world, and to somehow develop rationalities that can guide and manipulate the physical, social and cultural elements of life. This vision is contained in the "natural history" and social evolutionary views discussed earlier. The movement of events is defined as linear, sequential and hierarchical. In posing its own contradiction, the recent notions of progress expresses a view of causation that is anistorical, that is, the movement of events seems to have no temporal or situational context in which to locate change.

In much contemporary social and educational science, progress is tied to an assumption of determinism. The problem is social amelioration that reconciles the world of the individual with the world that already exists. The management approaches to instruction, behavioral objectives, criterion referenced measures, to name a few educational technologies, maintain this deterministic assumption. The effort to bring us closer to the millennium are no longer dependent upon deciphering the word of God. Progress, however, is still based upon a "natural order", an order found in the "nature" of knowledge, behaviors of teaching or learning.

We can explore the manner in which 18th and 19th century views of determinism have been incorporated into contemporary thought by focusing upon the problem of reification. Reification is the transformation of humanly created structures into "objects" that no longer seem man-made but rather are typified as products of nature. The world projected is a world that is alienated. Humanity is characterized as an inert object. Our conceptions of knowledge and institutions devalue the human efforts embedded in social creations, with human intentionality and expressiveness ignored (See Berger and Pullberg, 1965). The epistemology is one that breaks the unity of community, of craft and knowledge, thus obscuring the ways in which the social and cultural world is created,

sustained and renewed by human efforts.

The problem of reification underlies practices of educational psychology and scientific pedagogy. It is believed that schooling involves learning that can be described as having logical states or attributes that exist apart from our historical situation. Such reasoning is found in Bloom's taxomonies, Kohlberg's stages of moral reasoning or Piaget's developmental thought. Variations and relationships are seen as inherent to the logical typications. Progress is the movement of the individual towards the identified stages or attributes. Learning is to "reach" the appropriate stage, to mimic an attribute associated with problem-solving or science. Human variation is established as the relative achievement of individuals in mastering the predefined state or quality.

The problem of reificiation also becomes a problem of mystification as the objectivity is given theoretical potency. In certain fundamental ways psychology and pedagogy provide a mystification of society, social institutions and individual agency. The logical states become the ideal by which individual and social progress is assessed. Culture, history and individuality are to be defined by the abstract qualities and suprahuman states. This problem of mystification is a major one because of the importance of the contemporary intellectual in defining moral good and direction.

The transformation and variational evolution that Darwin gave emphasis is lost as attention is given to transhistorical and logical categories of thought and practice. The concern of much modern scholarship is upon how individuals move in relationship to persisting entities. To progress is to move towards mastery of the predefined states of qualities. The psychology of cognition, the definitions of democratic citizen or the organization of teaching consider the world as logical and hierarchical. The panorama of our classifications become simple gradations of our logical constructs. Consciousness is made to seem as merely learning, such as moving from low to higher order questions, or to practicing the logical steps that are defined as inquiry or discovery. The logic of the taxonomies assumes that there is progress as one moves up the ladder of the cognitive or affective categories. Yet the ladders represent neither the patterns by which individuals learn or create (Goldstein and Goldstein, 1978) or the dialectically complex relation between individuality and society.

The problems of reification and mystification are apparent upon examining teacher education texts in science and social studies (Popkewitz, 1983). An image of science is created that is devoid of interest, community, culture and history. Science is conceived as a logical endeavor, such as analysis and inferring, with disinterest guiding activity. It is believed that these abstract states mirror the practice of science. The problem of teaching methods and curriculum becomes the creation of strategies that mimic the abstract qualities. While I would not want to deny that thinking may contain elements of analysis and inferring or that the scientist may seek disinterest or

objectivity, these attributes do not stand alone but in a disciplinary matrix that provides a context of meaning and interpretation (see, e.g. Toulmin, 1982). To make the logical or psychological attributes as a literal part of the scientific activity is to misconstrue the history of science and its communal and craft qualities.

The reification of science is incorporated into our definition of social and political obligations. The democratic person in social studies curriculum is one who approaches social issues in a logical, rational, "scientific" manner. To think and act, it is believed, is to take serious only those elements which can be made logically explicit. Yet the political process does not work as abstract or logical processes but through conflict of interest, social pressures, struggles and historical considerations. Politics is a nonrational endeavor which the Greeks invented the ideas of praxis and poiesis to explore. To make the political process seem administratively organized is to ignore the politics of our conditions and its forms of social control.

Similar problems underlie our current models of social change. The models contain a metaphor that makes human change as analogous to the growth and development of an organism. The belief, I argued, emerges from Greek thought, is modified by Christian theology and secularized to provide a background assumption to our sciences. The millennial visions that were contained in the Christian ideas, however, are obscurred as models of change assume a seemingly neutral, administrative orientation towards social conduct. The sacradotal person is no longer considered as the interpretor and definer of moral will and direction. In their place is the scientist as the guarantor of movement and control. While the basis of authority in science is different from that of Christian theology, the earlier theological assumptions are maintained. These involve certain conceptions of time and social movement. They also entail social determinism and a reification of the social and cultural world. Science, in this instance, is not one of understanding, explanation and possibility. It is an ideology that conserves existing institutional arrangments and establisnes the primacy of the expert. As the contemporary American models of social and psychological change become introduced into non-Western and non-Christian contexts, particular and possibly conflicting assumptions and interests are also imported (see, e.g. Corwin, 1972).

When we examine the history of change in culture and social consciousness, there is no correspondence between the panorama of evolutionary change found in our educational sciences and the empirical world. (I find this fact one of the most ironical because of the presumption of these sciences that we can believe only that which is based upon fact.) Durkheim's (1936/1977) lectures on the emergence of the French secondary school illustrate the divergent themes of social order, change and history that underlie our human conditions and, indirectly, give force to our notions of progress. Durkheim suggests that institutions are resistant to change while at the same time subject to radical changes. Change emerges from an interaction of a variety of elements within a society. At least three distinct characteristics of

change are noted. One, schooling responds to pressures of larger social conditions as well as to developments internal to the institution. This is extremely important in that many of our notions of social change and development ignore the social and cultural influences upon pedagogical forms. David Hamilton's (1983) work illustrates the relation of pedagogical changes to larger transformations in consciousness and practice that exist at any one historical moment. Two, the present never breaks fully with the past. The past merges with and gives focus to our current horizons. Three, divergent themes run through both society and schooling. The conduct of schooling contains conflicting ideologies, themes, social interests and social visions about what school, individuality, and society should be (Kliebard, 1982). To understand schooling and its notions of learning is to understand the interaction of conflicting social interests. The scholarship on pedagogical change compells us to reconsider the Greek idea of cause as points of reference, and to focus upon history as a method of considering change.

In mistaking our linguistic fictions for the things modelled, we have become victimized by our metaphors. In portraying the actions of science, teaching or change as removed from human agency, we maintain a conception of mechanical causality in which people are replaced as the prime movers of the world. The world seems realized by following the order of nature or natural law. The individual's part in that world is as an object that is alienated from his or her own world producing activities.

The history of the idea of progress poses a dilemma when we consider the contemporary role of the intellectual. The intellectual has an important function in establishing moral will and direction. This occurs through the themes and values that are portrayed and given interpretation in our literature, arts and sciences. The social sciences, in particular, have incorporated an idea of progress into their paradigmatic tasks. Progress, it is believed, can be brought about through the use of scientific reason and rationality. Folk and technical literatures are replete with reference to "useful knowledge" and the belief that knowledge can be utilized. In educational research and evaluation, the academic is often involved in the problem of social amelioration.

We need to recognize a utopian element in our social theorizing. In creating languages about our social conditions, we inextricably tie our sciences to a posture about the possibilities of our social affairs. To describe is, at the same time, to give organization to how we challenge our situation.

It is a 19th century notion of progress that is embedded in our professional views of science, citizen and teacher. The notion poses fundamental contradictions for educational practice. The intent of schooling is to educate individuals. The mandate is a normative and progressive challenge. Its progressive element is that schooling is to help people understand the constraints, restraints and possibilities of our human conditions. The actual assumptions about progress that underlies pedagogy, however, reifies our social conditions and

institutions. There is a minimum of reflection and choice, and a mystification of institutional arrangements that is anti-intellectual. The world of schooling is one of certainty and evolution. The natural history of the 18th century, the evolutionary thought of the 19th century and the functional thought of social efficiency of the 20th century have a relation and continuity.

The belief that science can bring progress is not straightforward and without challenges. Embedded in the critiques of the left are outlooks about a future that are in contrast to those of social evolution or natural history. Yet the difference in thinking about the present and future should not obscure the fact that there is a belief in progress that can be brought about by a science of culture, society and individuality.

Recognition of the legitimating role of the intellectual should not, in itself, remove consideration of the meaning and importance of a vision of progress. The idea of progress injects a way of expressing hope and possibility into worlds that often serve to deny and to alienate. The problem of the intellectual in our contemporary world is not to obscure the relation of our sciences and visions of progress. To understand our social conditions is also to consider the possible function of science (and scientists) in reconstructing and renewing that society. To practice inquiry is to maintain a trust yet skepticism to our beliefs and institutions that bear upon our hopes.

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